

the Soviet Constitution, the people of Nagorno-Karabakh declared their independence. They then conducted a referendum as set forth in the same Soviet Constitution, and they are now an independent republic and should be recognized as a Nation, just like Azerbaijan, Armenia and any other former Soviet Republic. The situation has absolutely nothing to do with Armenia. The only role Armenia plays in this conflict is that country's part in peace negotiations.

Mr. Speaker, I am concerned that Armenia is being characterized as an abuser of human rights in the region when it is Azerbaijan who continues to maintain a blockade of both Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia, and regularly threatens a new wave of violence against Nagorno-Karabakh.

Such misrepresentations will undermine our Nation's credibility as an impartial mediator and jeopardize prospects for successful peace negotiations. It could also have a negative impact on U.S.-Armenia relations.

Our common aim as a country should be to focus on workable diplomacy that brings parties together in the spirit of conflict resolution, not to cause additional tension by introducing new and controversial elements into an already complex negotiating process.

Mr. Speaker, the United States has a long history of supporting Nagorno-Karabakh's democracy and its right to live in freedom and peace. The State Department has never made assertions in previous reports about Armenia being an occupier of Azerbaijani territory and Nagorno-Karabakh.

Last week, I sent a letter to Secretary Rice with my concerns over the State Department report's language, and I urged her to quickly reverse the State Department's mischaracterization.

ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION IS A WORLD CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, France has a new President, Nicolas Sarkozy. While the world waits to see if he will give vigor and energy and leadership to his complex and sometimes difficult French people, his position on illegal immigration is quite clear.

Europe has its influx of illegals, not unlike the United States. Northern Africans are fleeing their native lands for Europe. They go mostly to Spain, where French President-elect Sarkozy accuses Spain of promoting amnesty in that Nation. Of course, once in Spain, it seems these illegals can roam Europe with ease.

Mr. Sarkozy claims Spain wants to give amnesty to now 600,000 illegals in its Nation. Mr. Sarkozy wants to ban European Nations from offering amnesty. He wants to bolster the EU border agency, the group that parols the

African coast, with more police forces and use of the military to prevent the illegal landings in Europe.

It is interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, that Morocco, one of the Nations where people illegally flee to Europe from, wants the illegal flight to stop from its Nation. Almost 40 percent of the Africans that go to Europe by sea die in the process. This is a world crisis. Morocco wants to develop its native lands with European aid to keep people home, change the despair to hope by economic development, quit sending its problem to Europe but solve its problem. African Nations see the answer to solving their economic problems is not sending their populations to the north to Europe.

Mr. Sarkozy wants the European Union to have an EU-wide policy on illegal immigration and deal with this issue head-on instead of ignore the obvious. We shall see if this cooperation with the EU and France and the African countries works to stop the illegal entry, and we wish Mr. Sarkozy well in his presidency of France.

Meanwhile, back at home, here in the United States, our borders seem to be as open as ever because our government does not have the moral will to enforce the rule of law.

And that's just the way it is.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

A HEALTH CHECKUP FOR IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, a very disturbing report emerged from Iraq last week. According to press reports, medical students in Iraq will be denied diplomas even though they have completed all of the coursework and passed all of the required testing. This means that they would only be allowed to practice in Iraq, and no other country will accept their medical training or let them practice in the new country, even though they have met all of the requirements.

This harkens back to the Iraq we knew under Saddam Hussein's rule. Saddam refused to grant diplomas to medical students in order to keep them in the country. Who would have thought that the new Iraq government would resort to Saddam Hussein's old tricks? This is an alarming and troubling trend, and it should be reversed immediately.

While dozens of international medical relief organizations have been forced to leave Iraq because of serious security concerns, Iraqis have fewer

and fewer medical professionals available to them.

A well-known organization, Doctors Without Borders, related the story of one doctor, Dr. Bassam. He is an Iraqi physician specializing in orthopedic surgery living with his family in Baghdad.

His story says: Now, security issues have top priority for the few existing financial resources, and medical needs are forced to take a back seat. This morning, dozens of people were killed in Fallujah. Yesterday, it was Baghdad. And that's not counting the wounded, who add to the long list of emergency cases packing the hospitals. Every day brings a new batch of dead and wounded. In this context, patients simply cannot receive proper treatment from an increasingly overwhelmed health care system. Some are forced to sell their car, or even their house, to get certain kinds of care in the few hospitals able to provide it.

That is the end of his story.

Mr. Speaker, instead of locking people in against their will, the Iraqi government ought to be working with the international community to make Iraq a safe and prosperous place where people want to raise their families, where they want to stay, where they want to put down roots and contribute to the local communities.

If this is going to happen, the United States must dedicate our energies to bringing our troops home and to working with the Iraqi people to stabilize their infrastructure and social programs, programs that will provide health care, education and jobs. These are the most important needs for the Iraqis.

It is time, Mr. Speaker, to bring our troops home. It is time to provide a future of hope for the Iraqi people.

RENAMING THE DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Armed Services Chairman IKE SKELTON for including language in this year's Defense authorization bill to change the name of the Department of the Navy to be the Department of the Navy and Marine Corps.

I also thank Ranking Member DUNCAN Hunter who in the past has also included this language in the Defense authorization bill. This will be the sixth year that the House will send legislation to the Senate that supports this change. I hope that this year the Senate will agree that this change is long overdue.

Since 1947, Congress has twice affirmed that the Marine Corps is a separate military service within the Department of the Navy. In 1947, the National Security Act stated that we have four separate military services: